

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment and know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE PROSECUTION AND CONVICTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMED NASHEED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 402, S. Res. 392.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 392) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 392) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 8, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

**AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—Continued**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

**FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY**

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have a unique opportunity for the American people to have a voice in the direction of the Supreme Court. The American people should be afforded the opportunity to weigh in on this very important matter.

Our side, meaning the Republican side, believes very strongly that the people deserve to be heard, and they should be allowed to decide through their vote for the next President the type of person who should be on the Supreme Court.

As I have stated previously, this is a reasonable approach, it is a fair approach, and it is a historical approach—one echoed by then-Chairman BIDEN, Senator SCHUMER, and other Senators.

The other side, meaning the Democratic side, has been talking a great deal about the so-called pressure campaign to try to get Members to change their position. It is no secret that the White House strategy is to put pressure on this chairman of the Judiciary Committee and other Republicans in the hopes that we can be worn down and ultimately agree to hold hearings on the nominee.

This pressure campaign, which is targeted at me and a handful of my colleagues, is based on the supposition that I and they will crack and move forward on the consideration of President Obama's pick.

This strategy has failed to recognize that I am no stranger to political pressure and to strong-arm tactics—not necessarily just from Democratic Presidents but also from Republican Presidents.

When I make a decision based on sound principle, I am not about to flip-flop because the left has organized what they call a pressure campaign.

As many of my colleagues—and especially my constituents—know, I have done battle with administrations of both parties. I have fought over irresponsible budgets, waste, fraud, and policy disagreements. I have made tough decisions. I have stuck with those tough decisions regardless of what pressure was applied.

The so-called pressure being applied to me now is nothing. It is absolutely nothing compared to what I withstood from heavyhanded White House political operations in the past.

Let me say, by the way, that most of that has come from Republican White Houses. To just give a few examples, in 1981, as a new Member of the Senate and a brand-new member of the Senate Budget Committee, I voted against President Reagan's first budget proposal because we were promised a balanced budget and it didn't balance. I remember very specifically the Budget Committee markup in April 1981 on President Reagan's first budget.

It happened to be that I wasn't alone on this. I was one of three Republicans to vote against that resolution because it did not put us on a path to a balanced budget. You can imagine that when a budget has to come out on a party-line vote, you cannot lose three Republicans, and three Republicans who were elected in 1980 on a promise to balance the budget did not go along with it.

What a loss this was for this new President Reagan—that his budget might not get adopted by the Budget Committee. We were under immense pressure to act on the President's budget regardless of the deficits that it would cause. But we stood on principle and didn't succumb to the pressure.

As an example, right after that vote where the President's budget wasn't voted out of the Budget Committee, I was home on a spring recess. I remember calls from the White House. I remember threats from the Chamber of Commerce while I was home for Easter break, even interrupting my town meetings. Four years later, I led the charge to freeze spending and to end the Reagan defense buildup as a way to get the Federal budget under control. In 1984 I teamed up with Senator BIDEN, a Democrat, and Senator Kassebaum of Kansas, a Republican, to propose a freeze of the defense budget that would have cut hundreds of billions of dollars from the annual deficit.

At the time, it was known as the Kassebaum-Grassley Budget or the KGB defense freeze. We were going to make sure that across-the-board budgets were responsible.

For months, I endured pressure from the Reagan administration and from my Republican colleagues who argued a freeze on defense spending would constitute unilateral disarmament. President Reagan had put together a less aggressive deficit reduction plan. We didn't think it went far enough. My bipartisan plan was attacked for being dangerous and causing draconian cuts to the defense budget. I knew it was realistic and a responsible approach. I didn't back down.

We forced a vote that year in the Budget Committee. We forced a vote on the Senate floor on May 2, 1984, and that particular year we were not successful. However, this effort required the Senate and the Nation to have a debate about a growing defense budget. We started that debate, about the waste and inefficiency in the Pentagon and the growing Federal fiscal deficits. Despite the weeks-long pressure from conservatives in the Reagan administration, I did not back down because I knew the policy was on my side.

In this process I stood up to pressure from President Reagan, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger, Secretary Barry Goldwater, Senator John Tower, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and many others. I remember a meeting at the White House where I reminded the President that he had been talking through the campaign about the Welfare queens impacting the budget. It happens that I reminded him there were Defense queens as well.

I started doing oversight on the Defense Department. It wasn't long before the evidence of waste and fraud began appearing. We uncovered contractors that billed the Defense Department \$435 for a claw hammer, \$750 for toilet seats, \$695 for ashtrays. We even found a coffee pot that cost \$7,600.

I had no problem finding Democrats to join my oversight effort back then, but it is interesting how difficult it is to find bipartisan help when doing oversight in the current Democrat administration. Nevertheless, 12 months later, on May 2, 1985, after a year of